

Notice of Allowability**Application No.**

09/770,770

Examiner

Joyce Tung

Applicant(s)

BERNARD ET AL.

Art Unit

1637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 10/22/2003.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are claims 1-16.
3. The drawings filed on 25 January 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * Certified copies not received: _____.
5. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
(a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
6. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

7. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
8. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
(a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No. _____.
(b) including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed _____, which has been approved by the Examiner.
(c) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the margin according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

9. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No. _____
- Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material

- Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No. _____
- Examiner's Amendment/Comment
- Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
- Other

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Following the entry of the amendment filed 10/20/2003, the claims 1-16 are pending.

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Concerning claims 1-16, no prior art has been found teaching or suggesting the method of identifying a sequence alteration in a target nucleic acid as compared to a control nucleic acid by determining the ΔT_m for each of the overlapping probes, wherein the ΔT_m is the difference between the T_m of the target nucleic acid and one of the overlapping probes and the T_m of the control nucleic acid and the same overlapping probe and further determining the $\Delta\Delta T_m$, wherein the $\Delta\Delta T_m$ is the difference, if any, in the ΔT_m of at least two overlapping probes, as an indication of the presence or absence of a sequence alteration in the target nucleic acid as compared to the control nucleic acid.

The closest prior art is the reference of Guo et al.. Guo et al disclose the differences in thermal stability (T_m) between hybrids formed with normal and single-nucleotide-variant DNA targets which are increased by as much as 200% over conventional hybridization and this increases the discrimination of single nucleotide polymorphisms in DNA hybridization (See pg. 331, the Abstract). Guo et al. teach comparing the melting temperature of two probes(or even three probes), but do not teach or suggest a calculation of $\Delta\Delta T_m$ as an indication of the presence or absence of a sequence alteration in the target nucleic acid as compared to a control nucleic acid.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue

fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

2. Any inquiries concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joyce Tung whose telephone number is (703) 305-7112. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM-4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Benzion can be reached at (703) 308-1119 on Monday-Friday from 10:00 AM-6:00 PM.

Any inquiries of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Chemical/Matrix receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

3. Papers related to this application may be submitted to Group 1600 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Art Unit 1637 via the PTO Fax Center located in Crystal Mall 1 using (703) 305-3014 or 308-4242. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notice published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG 30 (November 15, 1989).

Joyce Tung
January 15, 2004

Jeffrey Siew
JEFFREY SIEW
PRIMARY EXAMINER
1/26/04